WORKSHOP IN METHODS

Synthetic Control Groups: An introduction to key concepts, recent extensions, and a hands-on application

Dr. Alex Hollingsworth

Assistant Professor
School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Dr. Coady Wing

Assistant Professor
School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Social scientists often look to policy change as a "natural experiment" that provides the opportunity to assess the causal effect of a policy treatment. For example, you might have data on an outcome both before and after an intervention for a "treated" unit and other "untreated" units. However, simply being untreated does not guarantee that those untreated units will serve as a valid control group for treated. Synthetic control methods use data on untreated units to produce a weighted control group that is more likely to serve as a valid control. These methods have become increasingly popular and can allow for causal inference in many settings where inference could not typically be done. This workshop introduces synthetic controls and will demonstrate a novel extension that exploits a machine-learning, data-driven approach that should be widely applicable to social scientists.

Friday
February 2, 2019
2-4pm

Social Science Research Commons
Grand Hall
Woodburn Hall 200

go.iu.edu/wim

Social Science Research Commons & Karl F. Schuessler Institute for Social Research